

Air Quality Standards Introduced by Obama Administration Derailed

In 2015, the EPA introduced the The National Ambient Air Quality Standards, which reduced the amount of ozone permitted at ground-level

COCOA, FLORIDA , USA, June 6, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On Tuesday last week, the House voted in favor of passing a Republican-backed bill that will delay the implementation of air quality regulations imposed by the Obama administration to reduce atmospheric pollutants responsible for causing smog.

With a vote of 229 in favor and 199 against the [Ozone Standards Implementation Act of 2017](#), the air pollution standards issued by the EPA under the Obama administration in 2015 will now be delayed by a further eight years before coming into effect.

However, the bill introduces some major changes, such as extending the EPA's mandatory review period of air quality standards from 5 years to 10 years, and environmentalists are worried that these changes will undermine the Clean Air Act.

An increase in ozone at ground-level can cause breathing difficulties to sensitive individuals, and results in the premature deaths of thousands of people each year.



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Rep. Gerald Connolly, D-Va.

Many health organizations, including the American Public Health Association, the National Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Lung Association are against the bill. [Harold Wimmer](#), president of the American Lung Association, feels that the industry-supported bill is a “direct assault” on the rights of the

American people to breathe clean, healthy air.

“The bill would delay lifesaving protections against ozone pollution, exposing Americans to unnecessary pollution levels that will lead to asthma attacks and premature deaths that could have



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been prevented,” said Wimmer, national president and CEO of the American Lung Association.

Yet House Republicans, together with pro-business organizations such as the US Chamber of Commerce, the American Chemistry Council and the American Petroleum Institute who support the bill, have lauded the decision to introduce this “common-sense legislation” that will protect US jobs.

The bill is part of move by President Trump and Republicans in congress to dismantle or block harsher public health and pollution standards that were introduced during the Obama era, largely supported by Democrats.

“This bill keeps us moving forward toward cleaner air,” said primary sponsor, Rep. Pete Olson, R-Texas, whose Houston-area district depends on the oil and gas industry. “This bill is about listening to job creators back home.”

Yet, Democrats argue that the bill, which they refer to as the “Smoggy Skies Act,” would result in an increase in the rate of asthma and lung disease leading to untimely deaths while simultaneously derailing years of environmental progress.

“This is a blueprint to Make America Sick Again,” Rep. Gerald Connolly, D-Va. counteracted, mocking the Trump campaign slogan.

While Republicans and Democrats, who both have different views and opinions on this issue and many others, exchange verbal blows, ultimately it is the American people that will suffer unless measures are taken to reduce air pollution.

Ground-level ozone increases when pollutants emitted by vehicles, oil refineries, power plants, chemical manufacturing plants, and other sources are released into the atmosphere where they react with sunlight. In 2015, the EPA introduced the The National Ambient Air Quality Standards, which reduced the amount of ozone permitted at ground-level from 75ppb to 70ppb. They reasoned that the billion dollar savings from reduced hospitalization and other public health benefits would far outweigh the estimated \$1.4 billion cost associated with adhering to these stricter standards .

The EPA cited recent scientific studies that showed ozone levels of 72ppb to pose a risk to healthy adults who exercised outdoors. They also noted that children are particularly vulnerable as they spend more time actively outdoors than adults, and their lungs are still developing.

The EPA projected that clean air initiatives introduced to curb these harmful emissions would result in the majority of US counties meeting the stricter standards by 2025. However, the future fate of these initiatives is unclear as the Trump administration continually pushes to withdraw support and funding for these programs. However, responsible businesses and corporations can take steps to monitor and reduce their emissions, regardless of the moves taken by the new role players who keep changing the rules to suit their own agenda. In fact, it is time for individuals and corporations alike to take a stand for the health of the citizens and the benefit of the country at large. With a simple hand-held emission analyzer, such as the [Ampro 2000](#), industries can analyze industrial gases such as oxygen, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrox, nitric oxide, nitrogen dioxide and sulfur dioxide, and monitor their industrial emissions.

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